



Plan Framework

This chapter provides background information about the Plan contents, summarizes how it was prepared, and provides an orientation to the reader on where to find key information.

This Plan is the result of data analysis and stakeholder collaboration intended to address transportation challenges facing Washington citizens and businesses. The Plan also fulfills federal and state requirements for a balanced and comprehensive transportation plan based on policy adopted by the Governor, the State Legislature, and the Congress.



“When I think of transportation, I think of safety, economic development, and a legacy for our children.”

Christine Gregoire
Governor

Purpose of the Plan

The primary purpose of the Plan is to guide transportation policy and investment decisions at all levels throughout the state. The Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) is also created to fulfill federal and state planning requirements.

As required by state law, this document has been prepared by the Washington State Transportation Commission. The Washington State Department of Transportation staffed the Commission in the preparation of the Plan and related materials. This update of the Washington Transportation Plan has taken place over the past two years through a comprehensive planning process involving public agencies, advocacy groups, citizens, and robust data and policy analysis.

Federal and State Requirements

The federal requirements of this document are codified in the United States Code of Federal Regulations, [Title 23, Section 135, subsection (e)] states that:

“Each State shall develop a long-range transportation plan, with a minimum 20-year forecast period, for all areas of the State, that provides for the development and implementation of the intermodal transportation system of the State.”

The state requirements of this document are stated in Washington State Statutes, [RCW 47.06.030 Transportation policy plan]:

“The commission shall develop a state transportation policy plan that (1) establishes a vision and goals for the development of the statewide transportation system consistent with the state’s growth management goals, (2) identifies significant statewide transportation policy issues, and (3) recommends statewide transportation policies and strategies to the legislature to fulfill the requirements.

The department shall develop a statewide multimodal transportation plan under RCW47.01.071 conformance with federal requirements, to ensure the continued mobility of people and goods across the state in a safe, cost-effective manner. The statewide multimodal transportation plan shall consist of:

(1) A state-owned facilities component, which shall guide state investment for state highways, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities and state ferries; and

(2) A state-interest component, which shall define the state interest in aviation, marine ports and navigation, freight rail, intercity passenger rail, bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways and public transportation, and recommend actions in coordination with appropriate public and private transportation providers to ensure that the state interest in these transportation modes is met.”

The Planning Process

The approach in planning for the statewide transportation system has been carefully undertaken as the task is vital to the well being of the state, our citizens’ quality of life, and the state’s economic vitality.

The data analysis of the WTP is structured by issues to focus on core outcomes and benefits desired in the future. The long range plan recognizes the inter-connectedness of the different modes and the key issues. This approach draws attention to the multiple benefits that programs and projects deliver.

“I appreciate the efforts to have this plan driven by factual data as opposed to what we think we know about our transportation system.”

Page Scott

Director,
Yakima Valley Conference of Governments

Phase 1: Analysis and Assessment of Conditions

Early on, the Commission employed a framework for the Plan using these strategic issues. Being strategic from the onset means that the plan is not a universe of all conceivable needs, but rather a methodical approach to investing where the benefits yielded are the greatest. To do this the Commission identified nine issues through which the needs of the state were to be systematically assessed.

The analysis and needs assessment of the Washington state transportation system considered Nine Key Issues:

- Preservation
- Safety
- Strong Economy and Good Jobs
- Moving Freight
- Transportation Access
- System Efficiencies
- Bottlenecks and Chokepoints
- Building Future Visions
- Health and the Environment

Phase 2: Prioritizing the Needs

The Commission set about addressing the needs identified during the assessment of the key issues by defining a set of Five Investment Guidelines. In determining the most beneficial investments, the commission prioritized the investment targets into High Priorities and remaining priorities.

Establishing Investment Priorities

The commission considered existing policy and issue-based data analysis, and decided to create the Plan around the Five Investment Guidelines.

The Five Investment Guidelines are the key to the Washington Transportation Plan. The Commission used these guidelines to select investment targets, which are described and structured in terms of these guidelines. High Priorities are presented in this plan, and the Remaining Priorities are included in the appendices.

Prioritized Investment Guidelines

1. Preservation
2. Safety
3. Economic Vitality
4. Mobility
5. Environmental Quality

Three Part Organization of the Plan:**Executive Summary****Part I. Introduction**

This part of the Plan is provided by the Washington Transportation Commission and introduces the reader to the context from which this Plan stems.

Part II. The Plan for the Future

The part of the plan analyzes, assesses and recommends solutions to challenges for the future of transportation in Washington

Plan Framework

This section explains how the document is organized. It also provides guidance for obtaining additional information online for further in depth research of the planning process and related information.

Chapter A. The Challenge

This chapter presents data and analysis conducted during the initial Planning process. The statistics and information in this section describe current conditions and projected changes in the transportation system for the next 20 years. The result is a forecast for Washington's future transportation needs.

Chapter B. Transportation Investments Underway

This chapter provides a detailed assessment of the investments currently underway and the investments yielded. The investment targets described in this chapter are those which are already at work addressing the needs identified in Chapter A. The funding and implementation of these investment targets is the result of the Governor's and Legislature's successful passage of the Transportation Partnership Act and the Nickel Package.

Chapter C. Unfunded High Priorities

This chapter provides a detailed assessment of the strategic investment targets which the commission found to be the most critical and effective. These investment targets are prioritized into High Priorities and Remaining Priorities. The process of prioritization was done through consideration of the benefits yielded, the Five Investment Guidelines, and Commission policy.

Chapter D. Policy Recommendations

This chapter contains recommendations for policies and strategies necessary to efficiently carry out the implementation of this plan.

Chapter E. Measuring Progress

This chapter provides a discussion of the measurements in place as well as recommendations for additional measurements which provide a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the Plan.

Part III. Focus on Transportation

This chapter provides a discussion of important factors influencing Washington's future and describes the Plan's role in the context of these issues. The purpose of this chapter is to inform the reader of the variables influencing transportation planning and policy.

Chapter A. Funding and Financing

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of financial costs and funding sources and mechanisms necessary to implement the identified targeted investments and make the most of Washington's transportation system.

Chapter B. Policy Studies and Plans

This chapter presents a discussion of policy studies and plans directly related to this Plan.

Chapter C. Governance and Partnerships

This chapter presents a discussion of the governmental programs and relationships which play very important roles in the effectiveness of the implementation of this plan.

Chapter D. Transportation and Land Use

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the relationship between land use and transportation, an ongoing and elusive puzzle which is the most complex and influential variable of transportation planning.

Glossary, References, Appendices

These sections of the plan are included to supplement the document and aid the reader by defining specific terms as well as provide a resource for related documents which contributed to the content of this plan.

Do you want additional Information?

Additional Information on the WTP, resources, related documents, and full issue reports can be found online at the following website:

www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/wtp

For detailed information and data used in the planning process, look in the Data Library. A link to this resource can be found at the above website.